B. Duty Concession/Payment made under the following schemes (as provided by Department of Revenue):

Sl. No.	Scheme	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08 (up to Feb. 2008)
1.	EOU/EHTP/STP/EPZs	9421.95	8266.34	10448.60	14385.51	21858.28
2.	Duty Drawback for Physical Exports	4415.00	2811.52	2659.82	5646	7595.75
3.	SEZ	1320.02	1077.31	1708.72	2204.59	2197.07

Hike in cement price

†3116. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of cement has been hiked recently by the cement industry in the country;

(b) if so, the extent of increase in the prices;

(c) the Government tax, increase in prices of fuel and its supply being less than the demand have been cited as the reasons for increasing the prices by the cement industry; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government on their above said reasons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) to (d) The prices of cement had increased sharply between December, 2005 and March, 2007 due to demand-supply mismatch. However, prices have largely stabilized since March, 2007, showing an increase of 4.44% between March, 2007 and March, 2008. Government has taken a number of measures to increase the supply of cement in the market to cater to increased demand. These include facilitating import by reducing the import duty on cement to 'Nil', removal of countervailing duty and special additional customs duty. Further, MMTC Ltd., a Government of India enterprise, TANCEM, a State Government enterprise of Tamil Nadu and M/s Puducherry Agro Services Industries Corporation (PASIC) have been given a special dispensation to import cement under the provisions of Cement (Quality Control) Order, 2003 to enable availability of significant quantities of imported cement in the market. The export of cement has also been banned and Government's resolve to take strict measures to curb profiteering and cartelization have been announced.

Patents issued during 2007

3117. SHRI P. R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) how many patents have been issued by the Patent Office in 2007;

(b) the details of it category-wise; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.